



# **Patriot Day**

## Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

### Saturday, September 10, 2011

Thank you.

And, thanks to all of you for allowing me to be a part of this special remembrance of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

I'm honored to share this day with you as we remember the souls lost -- the lives changed -- and how our State and Nation were changed forever.

Ten years have allowed us time to reflect upon the meaning of that terrible day.

I'm reminded that the writer -- Peggy Noonan -- said the sounds of the day will live long in our history -- especially the spontaneous messages of love that were sent by the victims -- moments before they perished.

There were voices that came from within the buildings and within the planes -- the phone calls and messages left on answering machines -- the last things said to loved ones.

There was Todd Beamer of United 93 praying on the phone with a woman he'd never met -- a Verizon supervisor.

She said later that Todd's voice was calm.

It seemed as if they were "old friends," she later wrote.

They said the Lord's Prayer together.

Then she heard him say ... "Let's roll."

Thirty-one-year-old Melissa Harrington, a California-based trade consultant at a meeting in the World Trade Center, called her father to say she loved him.

Minutes later she left a message on the answering machine as her new husband slept in their San Francisco home.

"Sean, it's me," she said.

"I just wanted to let you know ... I love you."

These are wonderful markers for us as we move through our daily lives -- as time moves us further away from the tragedies of that day.

And the thoughts of ...

- American Airlines Flight 11 ...
- American Airlines Flight 77 ...
- United Airlines Flight 175 ... and
- United Airlines Flight 93.

They are sentiments of some things extraordinary, some things enduring -- infinite love -- boundless hope -- yes, even the promise of redemption.

For me, one special symbol of September 11<sup>th</sup> is a simple tree -- a pear tree.

On September 11, 2001, the tree was growing with its deep bark, and thriving branches in the World Trade Center complex.

Its oval leaves were starting to turn with brilliant colors -- yellow and orange; red and pink; purple and bronze.

Then the planes struck.

When salvage efforts began, the tree was uncovered.

Ash was removed, and rescuers could see that the pear tree's crown had been blown off, its once thick branches had been reduced to stumps.

Still -- there was hope the tree could be saved.

So, on November 11, 2001, the eight-foot tree was moved to a nearby park.

Slowly -- ever so slowly -- it began to show signs of life.

A bud here, a green sprout there.

But -- then in March, 2010 -- heavy storms and strong winds uprooted the tree and it was heavily damaged once more.

And, yet – AGAIN -- it survived.

Nursed back to health, today the pear tree – now known as the Survivor Tree -- has grown to a height of 30 feet and has been replanted at the 9/11 Memorial Plaza, marking its homecoming to the World Trade Center site.

It's a symbol of a mysterious force -- like those echoing messages of love planted forever in our hearts on September 11th.

The tree is alive – and so is our country.

The pear tree's roots are deep -- its branches high -- its vibrant potential is still unfolding.

Surely it's nourished in part by an Invisible Hand -- one that cares for the symbol it nurtures -- one that protects the sounds of the voices that spoke of love before they fell silent.

The Psalms remind us that angels are commanded to guard us in all their ways; and lift us up in their hands, so we are comforted and kept safe forever.

Such angels are all around us today.

They are right beside us.

So, I invite all of you here – to take this opportunity with me -- to please stand ...

Turn to the angels in our midst – those who are keeping us safe – keeping our NATION safe -- our first responders, our service men and women and the law enforcement officers you see around you ...

Please stand and join me in saluting them for their service to this nation with our applause.

Thank you ... you may be seated.

On this day of remembering ...

We do not fail those who perished.

We do not let their memory go.

We raise them up and hold them tight in our prayers for the lives that they lived -- for the loves that they lost -- for the families that will never be the same.

And, we pay tribute to our SERVICE MEN and WOMEN – those who are risking their lives to hold high freedom's flame – so that flame can be seen from every corner of the world.

Their courage ... INSPIRES us.

Their valor ... STRENGTHENS us

Their patriotism ... HUMBLES us.

Their HONOR tells us to renew our commitment to each other -- to our liberty -- and to the enduring values that surround it.

May God bless you and your families;

May God bless Arizona;

And may God always bless and protect the United States of America.

Thank you.